

What is claimed is:

1 1. An improved hands-free speakerphone for use with a communications system,
2 said speakerphone comprising:
3 a speaker element;
4 a housing for enclosing the speaker element; and
5 at least one anti-sealing speaker port formed in the housing to permit sound
6 generated by the speaker element to be passed therethrough.

1 2. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 1, wherein the housing comprises an outer
2 surface portion surrounding the at least one speaker port, the outer surface portion possessing
3 sufficient curvature so as to reduce the risk that the outer surface portion including the at least
4 one speaker port can be sealed against the ear of a user placing the at least one speaker port
5 proximate the user's ear.

1 3. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 1, wherein the housing comprises a front
2 portion and a back portion that adjoins along a parting line in a fixed relationship when the
3 hands-free speakerphone is assembled for use, the at least one speaker port being located
4 proximate to the parting line.

1 4. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 3, wherein the at least one speaker port is
2 formed on an inner surface of the parting line.

5. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of speaker ports formed in the housing in a spaced relationship relative to each other.

6. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 5, wherein the spaced relationship includes sufficient spatial separation between speaker ports to reduce the risk that the housing can be sealed against the ear of the user.

7. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 6, further comprising a parting line formed along the exterior of the housing, and wherein the at least some of the plurality of speaker ports are formed proximate to the parting line.

8. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 7, wherein the housing comprises a first portion and a second portion and the parting line is formed at the juncture of the first housing portion and the second housing portion.

9. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 1, wherein the speaker element is held in a substantially fixed orientation with respect to the at least one speaker port, the at least one speaker port being formed in a surface of the housing that is oriented such that the sound produced by the speaker element must be reflected off at least one interior surface prior to reaching the housing surface in which the speaker part is formed.

10. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 9, further comprising an acoustical element for redirecting sound generated by the speaker element toward the at least one speaker port.

11. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 10, wherein the acoustic element is integrally formed with the housing.

12. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 10, further comprising a liquid crystal display (LCD), and wherein LCM forms at least part of the acoustical element.

13. A hands-free speakerphone for use in connection with a telephone communications system, the hands-free speaker comprising a housing having a first housing portion and a second housing portion that, when assembled, retain a speaker element in a substantially fixed relationship with respect to the assembled housing, the housing forming at least one speaker port having a position and orientation such that sound produced by the speaker element reaches the at least one speaker port substantially indirectly, the at least one speaker port being formed on a curved surface of the housing, the curved surface of the housing possessing sufficient curvature to avoid a seal being formed between the speakerphone and the ear of a user placing the at least one speaker port proximate to the ear.

14. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 13 further comprising a parting line formed on an exterior surface of the housing, wherein the at least one speaker port is located proximate the parting line.

15. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 14, wherein the parting line is formed along the juncture of the first housing portion and the second housing portion.

- 1 16. The hands-free speakerphone of claim 13, further comprising a plurality of
2 speaker ports formed in the housing.

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